

December 17, 2025

Ann Stevens
Division of Academic Affairs
University of Colorado Boulder
2055 Regent Drive, Room 360
Boulder, Colorado 80309-0040

Sent via U.S. Mail and Electronic Mail (ann.stevens@colorado.edu)

Dear Provost Stevens:

FIRE's Student Press Freedom Initiative remains concerned about CU Boulder's ongoing investigation into Ašiihkionkonci Parker. While we were pleased to learn the interim disciplinary measures against Parker were lifted in November, the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution investigation into them has not ended nearly two months later.

As we explained previously, Parker had the right to be in the University Memorial Center and to cover the protest. Accordingly, CU Boulder cannot justify investigating Parker's newsgathering. This holds even if the investigation clears Parker of any wrongdoing. Again, the question is not whether formal punishment is meted out, but whether the institution's actions "would chill a person of ordinary firmness from continuing to engage in [the protected] activity."¹ Parker and other student journalists are likely to be deterred from covering controversial protests for fear of being investigated by the SCCR.

Moreover, this undue delay risks Parker's right to due process and fair procedure. Witness statements taken months after the alleged violation of university policy are sure to be less useful to Parker's defense than those gathered in a reasonable timeframe. Such a delay hinders the ability of any witnesses to accurately recall the events at issue, and ultimately fails to provide Parker with a meaningful opportunity to prepare and participate in the SCCR disciplinary process. CU Boulder's stated commitments to student journalists simply do not comport with this ongoing investigation.

We request a substantive response confirming the university will close its investigation into Parker no later than December 29, 2025.

¹ *Worrell v. Henry*, 219 F.3d 1197, 1212 (10th Cir. 2000) (internal quotations omitted).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Marie McMullan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marie" and last name "McMullan" clearly distinguishable.

Marie McMullan
Student Press Counsel, Campus Rights Advocacy

Cc: Christopher Paddock, Associate Director of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution
Katherine Aidala, Senior Associate Counsel